



**U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection**

DEC 16 2015

Commissioner

The Honorable Keith Rothfus  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Rothfus:

This letter is in response to your October 9, 2015 correspondence regarding U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) staffing levels at the Port of Pittsburgh. The co-signers of your letter will receive a separate, identical response.

CBP is tasked with protecting our nation's borders as well as enforcing numerous laws at our nation's ports of entry on behalf of a variety of other government agencies, including state and local law enforcement. With regard to CBP staffing at the Port of Pittsburgh, currently there are 11 CBP officers, including a Port Director and a Supervisory CBP Officer. CBP also has two CBP Agriculture Specialists, one Entry Specialist, and one CBP Technician assigned to the Port of Pittsburgh. With this staff, CBP is committed to ensuring security at the Port of Pittsburgh, while continuing to facilitate legitimate travel and trade in the most effective manner possible.

CBP determines staffing requirements and staffing allocations based on the principles within its Workload Staffing Model. The approach considers current and anticipated drivers of staffing, including workload, facility capabilities, and operating hours. CBP monitors staffing levels at its ports regularly, ensuring consistency with other ports with similar volume and mission, under the limitation of budget constraints. While passenger volume has increased at the Port of Pittsburgh since 2008, total arriving passenger volume is substantially below the peaks it hit in the early 2000s. CBP's analysis indicates that the current number of CBP officers at the Port of Pittsburgh could adequately process additional passenger volume. With its current staffing level, CBP Pittsburgh was able to process the 59,000 Fiscal Year 2015 passengers with an average wait time in primary passport control of a 14.85 minutes.

With regard to requests for extended operational hours and additional landing rights, CBP considers these requests on a case-by-case basis. CBP port directors make a concerted effort to accommodate these requests. However, at times it may be necessary to deny a request based on an adverse impact to port security, disruptions to inspectional operations, or other legitimate concerns. Scheduling a new flight outside of existing operations could generate the need for additional CBP officers that may not be feasible,

whereas adding the new flight into a time slot that is already fully staffed may offer the most economically viable solution.

Another possible option for the Allegheny County Airport Authority to consider is a Reimbursable Service Agreement. This authority, granted under Section 559 of Division F of the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014* (P.L. 113-76), gives CBP the flexibility to work with stakeholders to identify business solutions for a variety of border management needs through a formal reimbursable service agreement. We anticipate that the next open season application period will be in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2016.

Regarding the accessibility to CBP's passenger operations office in Pittsburgh, although the office is located in the secure area of the international terminal beyond the Transportation Security Administration checkpoint, CBP Pittsburgh maintains a publicly available telephone number, should anyone need to speak to an officer. This minimizes unnecessary hardship on CBP staffing, which can potentially impact passenger processing operations.

The Global Entry enrollment office at Pittsburgh is managed in such a way as to have no effect on passenger processing and minimal impact to our trade operations. Global Entry is a voluntary program that allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travelers upon arrival in the United States. Demand for this program is high in the Pittsburgh area and nationwide, and CBP is committed to meeting that demand. Pittsburgh currently has two Global Entry kiosks, therefore increasing enrollment can facilitate travel without additional staff.

The Centralized Examination Station (CES) in Pittsburgh was closed in 2013 due to a lack of cargo volume. CBP's cargo office was relocated in June 2013 to Atlantic Aviation, a Pittsburgh Fixed-Base Operator. That office is publicly accessible Monday through Friday during the hours of 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The cargo office hours of operation are managed as to provide maximum service to the trade community with minimum impact on passenger processing operations, as the vast majority of international flights arrive after 1:30 p.m. to Pittsburgh.

If we may offer further assistance, please contact Mr. Michael Yeager, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Congressional Affairs, at (202) 344-1760.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Gil Kerlikowske". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "G".

R. Gil Kerlikowske  
Commissioner